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SUBJECT: KOME OILFIELD SECURITY

Classified By: RSO Brad Markwald, reason 1.5c and 1.5e

SUMMARY

¶1. (SBU) After receiving tearline information that suspected extremists had allegedly conducted surveillance on the Doba Oil facility in Chad, on May 24, 2007 the Regional Security Officer was invited to review the oilfield security operation in the Kome region of Chad near the city of Doba by the head of security in Chad for Exxon/Esso. A review of the facilities and the force protection assets deployed by the Chadian government was conducted and recommendations were given to the security official. While adequately set up for loss prevention and anti-theft deterrence, RSO observed the facility was completely unprepared for even a minor terrorist attack. END SUMMARY

BACKGROUND AND THE OILFIELD PROJECT

¶2. (SBU) On May 21, 2007 the Regional Security Officer was instructed to pass tearline language to the appropriate EXXON-MOBILE officials responsible for security. Specifically, as of mid-May 2007, the Doba Oil facility in Chad had allegedly been surveilled by suspected extremists. The specific intent of this surveillance was unknown. In response, RSO met with the regional coordinator for security at Exxon-Mobile that evening. Afterwards, the RSO was invited down to the region to inspect the current force protection measures and make recommendations as appropriate. The Kome oil fields stretch from Moundou to Doba and finally to Sarh. It encompasses a 12,272 (21,000 km) square mile area of operation. There are actually 9 camps in all with the strategic operations center located at the Kome 5 camp. The entire process operates under EEPIC, the Esso Exploration and Petroleum Chad Inc. under the local authority of the Chadian National Petroleum Project (CNPP).

¶3. (U) Thursday, May 24, RSO and Exxon security flew to Kome 5 via the regularly scheduled charter flight operated. Security at their airport locations in N,djamena and at the airstrip in Kome 5 was organized and effective. Because the company does not allow alcohol at any of their facilities in Chad, the unintended result is that all passengers and baggage are completely searched. No firearms are allowed and any edged weapons must be in checked baggage for the flight. The runway at Kome 5 is improved laterite and should hold up to extensive use, even during a rainy season. The facilities in the Kome 5 area are typical of the entire operation. In total, there are 450 oil production sites, 50 construction sites and 2000 personnel of which many are American expatriate workers.

LOSING HEARTS AND MINDS

¶4. (C) Initial discussions with the security staff revealed considerable tensions between the operation and its surroundings. Last year alone theft from oilfield property was over half a million USD. Public relations efforts have fallen short of the local,s expectations and a growing resentment is building towards the oil project and its workers. More layoffs are scheduled for next year as old construction projects finish. Attacks on local security and production personnel are rising. Historically, local leaders and politicians were opposed to the project. The local population complains that the Chadian government is not doing more for them with the oil profits. They want more individual compensation payments, and are upset the government hasn,t made more progress on setting up the fund from community compensation projects. Aided by stagnant wages that have not increased significantly in the last few years and another round of layoffs, labor unions have exploited the situation; provoking several strikes and protests that have shut down or restricted production. Fuel shortages are a common occurrence and at the time of this visit, the entire facility had only 5 days of fuel oil for the generation of power. If the operation loses power, the pipeline loses pressure. It takes up to three weeks to get the pressure up to operating levels.

THE FACILITIES AND ASSESMENT

¶5. (SBU) The Kome 5 and surrounding major facilities are enclosed with a 9-foot chain link fence with a barbed wire anti-climb barrier. Several large washout holes where rain has run off and cleared away the base of the fence were observed. Many were large enough for an intruder to exploit. Although it was daytime, there appeared to be adequate lighting set up throughout the compound. Guard posts were spaced about every 200 meters along some sections of the fence. Other sections were patrolled by guards on foot. Very few CCTV cameras were observed. An unpaved road used by the local guard mobile patrol ringed the compound. It was in poor condition and should degrade significantly during the coming rainy season. The road prevents trees and other objects from assisting intruders who might try scaling the fence. Several gates are located around the perimeter secured with a chain and padlock, guarded by at least one unarmed local security officer. The main entrance does not have an anti-vehicle barrier. A second gate has a drop arm access control device that has little to no anti-ram capability. Some of the guards at the main entrance or in the interior are armed with a police baton. There were no Chadian security forces at the entrance. Access control is effective and all vehicles were visually searched before entering and exiting. However, no IED search is performed, only a visual scan of the interior.

¶6. (C) At Kome 5, two inner compounds have been separated. No anti-ram or vehicle barriers are present at these compounds. The first area is the general housing compound. Access to this compound is further restricted to only authorized personnel (occupants and assigned workers) by unarmed contract guards but perimeter fencing remains identical with numerous washout points. The other inner compound encloses the Central Treatment Facility (CTF) and other oil processing equipment. The fencing here is the same but with a motion detector system. It has less washouts and more standoff distance between the fence and the facilities in the perimeter. RSO was informed the motion detection system has problems and does not always work properly. It is set up to activate in zones when triggered to assist in guard response. A CCTV system is planned for eventual installation that will be tied to the motion sensors. Once activated, the camera in the area of the sensor will provide visual surveillance of the triggered area. There is a very large drainage culvert that runs along most of the inner perimeter. It could easily stop any vehicle approaching it from the outside. However, at several points the culvert is bridged to allow direct access from the back of the compound. A vehicle could drive through the fence, over the bridge and gain unrestricted access to the CTF,s critical structures

with minimal preparation. The CTF is the heart of the oil operation and even a minor attack on this complex would shut the facility down for months if not years. The ecological disaster that would immediately follow would be immense. The main pipelines feeding the complex to include the MA1 line to Cameroon are all buried and not exposed.

¶17. (C) The main operations center is not separated from the general compound. Many of the adjacent structures are of a pre-fabricated design and offer no protection in case of attack. On the contrary, their simple construction would shatter and produce a lot of shrapnel if subjected to an explosive device. The main facility has good access control procedures with Radio Frequency ID card readers limiting unauthorized access. The main entrance and all windows are not hardened for forced entry or ballistic protection. A prepared and determined attacker could breach the facility easily.

¶18. (C) A tour of the outlying operations revealed even less protective measures in place. Wellpads and drill rigs were almost entirely defenseless. Vandalism and theft to protective fencing around expensive monitoring equipment has left just about every facility at risk. After trying to keep pace with the theft of security fence doors (which are stolen by locals to make beds), security gave up and has a plan to use surplus shipping containers to cover the equipment. With over 450 well points and pumping stations, it is impossible to guard all the facilities and many of the more remote locations may go a long time without seeing a security patrol. RSO noted active wells were totally open and exposed; \$7,000 high pressure cables lay unprotected and are routinely stolen. Multi-million dollar drill rigs had unarmed guards in the area but nothing to prevent a concerted attack. RSO was informed that five drill rigs are in constant rotation and operation.

¶19. (C) The Driller,s Camp is located about 15 km,s from the main camp at Kome 5. This facility is the residential and operational base for the bulk of the field workers in the area. Its security posture is identical to the Kome 5 facility in regards to guard posting, access control and perimeter defenses. Of serious concern is the location of the explosives storage bunker and the radioactive material storage container. The explosives bunker is located approximately 10 meters from the chainlink fence line. An unarmed guard protects the vehicle entrance to the bunker. Again, access control is tight to prevent theft but not to deter attackers. The radioactive materials container is above ground and clearly marked with the international radioactive hazard sign. It was also 10 meters from the fence as well and unguarded. Both sites were not protected by any substantial vehicle barriers.

SECURITY FORCES) OR LACK THEREOF

¶10. (SBU) Exxon contracts the bulk of its local guard force from three providers. There are roughly 1000 guards per shift spread out over the region. They are unarmed except for impact batons. Augmenting this force are 112 locally hired EEPCI security guards, similarly lightly armed.

¶11. (C) In support of this massive operation, the government of Chad has provided approximately 165 Gendarmes - approximately 1 armed police officer per 77 square miles (128km). That,s also assuming all Gendarmes are in service which, according to Exxon security is a rare occurrence. They are armed with an assortment of light weapons to include various automatic pistols and AK-47 type assault rifles. They do not have access to medium or heavier weapons such as crew-served machine guns, armored vehicles or RPG,s. They are paid a daily per diem for meals and incidentals by EEPCI. Because the Gendarmes do not have many vehicles and even less fuel, they are also provided 64 four-wheel drive trucks with drivers and 4 buses. RSO visited the main Quick Reaction

Force (QRF) camp just outside a back gate at Kome 5. Both the Chadian Gendarmes and their EEPCI drivers are collocated in a facility designed to provide instant reaction to any threat. A contract or other EEPCI security guard would alert the base by radio of the threat and its location. The QRF would respond immediately. RSO observed the facility to be clean but organized for comfort rather than for the mission they are providing. All the occupants were either in their T-shirts and flip-flops playing cards and eating or sleeping in their tents. Weapons were stored in a haphazard manner with no one posted for guard duty on the camp. Attackers with only a limited amount of training could easily overcome this, the only real armed response without much effort, leaving the entire facility exposed for an extended period. Even if they were to respond, it is doubtful with the weapons on hand they could repel an organized attack.

¶12. (C) RSO visited two other sub-camps and observed the same activity with the exception - some were doing laundry. As mentioned earlier, if the roads deteriorate with the coming rains, organized response time for the QRF and Gendarmes would be slow at best and could be as long as 30 minutes to the main Kome 5 site. Much more if they needed to respond to a more remote location. Chadian government support for the oilfields is completely lacking. All local police and Gendarmes security forces receive little to no training from their host organizations. RSO was informed by an EEPCI security manager that the Gendarmes often sell their ammunition for extra money. It is probable that most don't have much more than one magazine of ammunition with a few having none at all.

CONCLUSIONS) NO GOOD NEWS

¶13. (C) The Exxon/Mobile oilfield projects in southern Chad are totally unprepared for any level of terrorist attack. In confidence, oil security and executives have said if any threat is ever determined to be specific, they would quickly shut down the operation and cease production. GoC provided resources are entirely dependant on EEPCI for mobility and as the Gendarmes often go months without pay, they are a source of income. What is provided lacks numbers, motivation, discipline and training. Their morale is poor and their equipment is not adequate for their mission. When the project was first planned, an internal company threat assessment did not identify the area as susceptible to a terrorist attack; this despite the almost complete lawlessness and open borders between Sudan, the Central African Republic and Cameroon. As a result, the entire facility was constructed around loss prevention. It would take months if not years to harden the facility to attack and RSO was told again in confidence that was not going to happen. Since last year the investment in the project has been recovered. If threatened, they would shut down their operation and sell what remains to the Chinese. A project of this size, being led by a high profile American oil company and staffed by a significant portion of Americans is an ideal target anywhere) let alone in an area with such political and economic instability, high crime and bordered by a fundamentalist Islamic state.

¶14. (C) The fact that the facility is almost entirely undefended and surrounded by disgruntled locals makes the site extremely vulnerable to any sort of attack) terrorist or otherwise. For various reasons, the Chadian security services assigned to the oil project have not received the necessary resources, training and leadership to complete their mission. EEPCI needs to do a lot more liaison with local officials with emphasis on strengthening the local economy to provide jobs outside the oil industry in anticipation of more layoffs. The USG should consider providing to the local police and Gendarmes with basic to advanced firearms training as well as instruction in police and patrol tactics to counter any terrorist threat. If extremists have indeed surveyed the facility for attack, they've undoubtedly come up with the same conclusions as to

its vulnerabilities.
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